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New MBCB web site open for business

JACKSON, Miss. (Special) — A new and improved Worldwide Web site for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) is now open for business at www.mbc.org, utilizing the latest Internet technology to provide significantly more information in an up-to-date and user-friendly format.

William H. Perkins Jr., editor of The Baptist Record and chairman of the MBCB committee that designed the new web site, said the goal was to craft a state-

Toward that purpose, the main menu bar at the top of the home page includes drop-down menus that list:

- the MBCB organizational chart (under "about us").
- MBCB events in chronological order and by event name.
- Mississippi Baptist churches and associations.
- MBCB personnel by title and name.
- information on the three MBCB camps and conference

Details President Jesse Palmer is a graduate of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and a former church staffer. His company has provided web site services for a number of Southern Baptist entities, including First Church, Jackson; Bellevue Church, Memphis; and LifeWay Christian Resources.

Palmer said the MBCB web site presented a first-of-its-kind challenge for the company's Ezekiel technology, and many

Christians will embrace the Internet over the next five years," Palmer said.

"The complexity and functionality of the MBCB web site, both the public side and the administrative side, have allowed us to show just how versatile and robust the Ezekiel technology is. Even more exciting is that the MBCB staff actually set up and will manage the Web site themselves," he added.

Barri A. Shirley, MBCB associate executive director for business services, said future plans for the web site include real-time broadcasts of MBCB events such as the convention's annual meeting each fall, overnight updates on MBCB-sponsored mission trips around the world, and on-line registration/fee payment for MBCB events.

"This new web site is a great leap forward for Mississippi Baptists. I believe we are perfectly positioned now to harness the explosive potential of the Internet to accomplish our mission of helping to bring Mississippi and the world to Jesus," Shirley said.

of-the-art site that would maximize users' time — whether the user is a Mississippi Baptist familiar with MBCB programs or an unsaved person anywhere in the world who is searching for the Gospel message.

"Internet users are famous for their short attention span. If a page doesn't load in a few seconds, they're off to another site. We wanted the MBCB site to be fast and informative regardless of the user's technical expertise or spiritual situation, and I believe we've accomplished those benchmarks," Perkins said.

The site's home page includes sections entitled: How do I become a Christian?, Pray for me, and How can I get involved?

"We want persons who are unfamiliar with the Christian faith to visit the web site and see that Mississippi Baptists care about their salvation; want to pray for them in their hour of need; and would like for them to become involved in Kingdom work," Perkins explained.

The web site is also designed to allow Mississippi Baptist pastors, church staffers, and laypeople to quickly locate the information they are seeking on a particular MBCB program or event.

"While it is very important to make the web site accessible to lost people who are seeking the Gospel, we also wanted the web site to be as useful as possible to Mississippi Baptists searching for specific information," Perkins said.

centers: Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian, Camp Garaywa in Clinton, and Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko.

- MBCB departments.
- a web site map.

In addition, the home page features news of interest to Mississippi Baptists and buttons that will take viewers to local church highlights and the weekly Directions column written by MBCB executive director-treasurer Jim Futral.

"The Mississippi Baptist web site does not replace the telephone, mail, or personal relationships. It does provide information, inspiration, and interaction that can be beneficial to folks all across the state and beyond," said Futral. "Take a few minutes and come for a visit."

The web site is powered by Ezekiel, a proprietary software system by Details Communications, Inc., of Birmingham, that is targeted specifically at religious organizations' web site needs.

hours of computer code writing went into the project.

"The Internet is the greatest tool and technology for the church of Jesus Christ since the invention of the printing press. It will be absolutely amazing to watch how churches and

Miss. Baptists respond to flood



Mae Hardin (right), a member of First Church, Winona, entertains an unidentified infant at the Red Cross Service Center in Baton Rouge after the emergency child care unit of the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Unit was activated June 16-23. The activation came in response to widespread flooding in Louisiana caused by Tropical Storm Allison. A total of 14 Mississippi Baptist child care volunteers served at the center while parents applied for disaster assistance. (BR special photo)

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

GBA swamped by storm

4

Directions

5

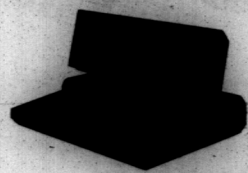
Letters to the editor

8

Alcohol and children

11

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America the Incredible

A few days from today, we will celebrate the 225th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America — to our way of thinking the greatest nation that ever existed. As we approach July 4, 2001, it would behoove us (as it does every year) to pause long enough from the pomp and pageantry to reflect on God's manifold blessings to our incredible country.

The first thought that comes to this writer's mind is the fact that American Christians have for 225 years been a rare exception to the norm when it comes to the manner in which the world has treated believers for the past 2000 years.

The usual fate of Christians at the hands of the world has been persecution, tragedy, and martyrdom. Such was the fate of some of our Baptist forebears even in this country.

For hundreds of years, feeding Christian men, women, and children to wild animals was considered a warm-up act to the gladiator battles in the vast stadia that dotted the Roman Empire from end to end.

Pogroms over two millennia claimed the lives of an uncountable number of Christians, who were accused of everything from eating village children to starting the fire that destroyed Neronian Rome.

As Heb. 11 relates, Christians have been flogged, placed in chains and thrown in prison, stoned, sawed into pieces, and put to the sword. Destitute, persecuted, and mistreated, Christians have been forced to wander the earth's deserts and live in holes in the ground.

Even today, Christians stand out as one of the most persecuted religious groups on the planet. In Sudan, Christian parents are put to death before the eyes of their children, who are then sold in the well-established slave markets of the country.

On the Indonesian island of Ambon, Christians are being driven into the sea by Muslim warriors imported from other parts of the country. Thousands and thou-

sands of Ambon believers have simply disappeared, and many more have been forced at gunpoint to convert to Islam.

All in all, Christians have had a hard way to go for virtually the entire existence of the faith. Not so with American Christians, however, who assemble and worship in freedom absent the threat of physical violence and death.

God has also entrusted us with the resources to reach the world for Christ — the money and materials to get the job done — and to whom much is given in this regard, much should be expected in return.

The second thought that comes to mind is the awesome sacrifice of lives that has been required to keep this country free. We must never forget the gift of liberty granted to us by those who died on battlefields spanning the globe, so that we and many other countries could be free of tyranny.

The men and women who today compose our armed forces are just as willing to defend our freedoms. They should be an important part of our daily prayers.

Thanks largely to those who have willingly laid down their lives for this country — and those who are willing to do so even today — there is no power on earth that

THANKS



can stop American Christians from banding together to bring Mississippi and the world to Jesus.

May it always be so. America has its share of problems and, in terms of the culture, often seems hopelessly hedonistic. However, that doesn't mean that American Christians should ever lose their focus on the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

We have been given our mission, and may we be found faithful in fulfilling it. May it always be so.

God bless America the Incredible.

IN MY VIEW:

*This July 4, another
hero is born*

By Tony Martin, Associate Editor

In that hallowed tradition of mothers and fathers sending their young sons off to stand in harm's way, our son Jeremy — our firstborn — left his home on Sunday, June 24, headed for boot camp in San Diego.

Putting feet on a decision he made some months ago before his high school graduation, Jeremy has entered the United States Marine Corps. If all goes well, in about thirteen weeks the Corps will have made a new Marine: a leatherneck, a devil dog, a jarhead.

You've got to love those Marine nicknames.

My wife Teresa and I have been emotionally wracked by all this, which I suppose is proper and the way it should be. Jeremy has been a joy for us, and we send him off with a bizarre mix of unequaled pride and unparalleled heartache. He'll be fine, and we'll be fine, too.

On November 10, 1775, the Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia passed a resolution stating that "two Battalions of Marines be raised" for service as landing forces with the fleet.

This resolution established the Continental Marines and marked the birth date of the

United States Marine Corps. What a rich heritage! "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli," the Marine Corps has been always faithful — *semper fidelis* — to look out for our country's welfare.

Whether it be the Marine Corps, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, or the Coast Guard, our armed services stand ready to protect.

The world is at relative peace these days, and the United States is not embroiled in any real global conflict. Of course, our freedoms were secured on July 4, 1776.

For the last 225 years, rough men (and, more recently, women) in their military uniforms have kept watch over us

in the dark hours of the night, and because of their tireless vigilance we continue to hold these liberties.

God forbid that we take these liberties for granted! How prone we are to lay our heads on our pillows each evening, tucking the covers around our chins, with no thought of why we are able to sleep in peace.

Our forefathers drew the proverbial line in the sand on what we now call Independence Day, separating ourselves from the tyranny of foreign despots, and to this day we hallow the memory of what they did for us.

Revisionist history aside, I am persuaded that they were motivated by divine mandate. Thomas Jefferson, author of that

precious document signed July 4, 1776, wrote the following in 1781: "God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the Gift of God? ... Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

As the Marines and the other service branches protect us, so should we be just as vigilant in protecting our families and our faith.

History shows that there are foreign interests who would like nothing better than to see the United States falter and crumble, and there is a spiritual adversary who in like fashion wants to see our homes and churches destroyed.

So we keep watch. We stay at our posts. We zealously guard ourselves against the enemy.

Jeremy will finish his training and have a few days at home with us before moving on to his permanent duty post. He is, and will always be, my son.

I sure do love him. Now, though, our relationship will be subtly different. Not only is he my son, he is now also my hero.

NEW ORLEANS (Editor's Network) — As America's traditional families continue disintegrating, Christians must continue to work to protect God's plan for marriage and child development, James Dobson told the Southern Baptist Convention June 13. Speaking to the closing ses-

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God's plan for marriage and child development, James Dobson told the Southern Baptist Convention June 13. Speaking to the closing ses-

sion of the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans, the founder of Focus on the Family encouraged Baptists both to work to preserve the institution of the family and to safeguard their own families.

Dobson spoke via satellite from his office in Colorado Springs, Colo., because his jet had malfunctioned en route to New Orleans, forcing him to return home.

Recently released statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau show the critical status of American families, Dobson said. According to the census statistics, during the past 10 years:

- The number of households headed by unmarried partners increased 72%.
- The number of households headed by single mothers increased 25%.
- The number of households headed by single fathers increased 62%.

Additionally, Dobson said, census figures state that for the first time in American history households with both a married couple and children in the home have fallen below 25% of all households.

"The family is disintegrating. It's not just Christians or conservatives who are drawing this conclusion," Dobson said. "If the family disintegrates, then everything goes with it because our government, our institutions, our way of life, everything sits on that foundation of the family."

Two byproducts of disintegrating families are suffering children and declining family evangelism, he said.

Dobson said the chaos and unpredictability of a failing family affects boys more harshly than girls.

He said he recently completed a book titled "Bringing Up Boys." Among his findings were that boys are three times more likely than girls to be on drugs, five times more likely to commit suicide, and 12 times more likely to commit murder.

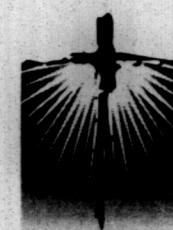
"Why are boys in such trouble? The reason is because of the breakup of family," Dobson declared.

"Boys, because of their nature and testosterone and all that makes up what a boy is, are more likely to get in difficulty when there's chaos in a family," he added. "They need stability. They need predictability."

Dobson said boys also need male role models to teach them what it means to be a man. Boys are born emotionally attached to their mothers but transition that attachment to their fathers between ages two and five, the psychologist said.

"Boys are not born knowing what it means to be a boy. They certainly aren't born knowing what it means to be a man... They learn that from being around the male role model, hopefully a father."

In some cases when boys have no male role model to

MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST Record

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VOL. 125

No. 21

learn from, they can attach back to their mothers and potentially develop homosexual tendencies, Dobson asserted.

"You hear often that homosexuality is genetic nature. Don't you believe it," he said, adding that there's not "a scrap of evidence" to document that claim.

The disintegration of the family also has the potential of yielding entire generations of families that don't know about Christ, Dobson said.

"The soil in which the seed of the Gospel is planted will turn acidic if there are no families," he pointed out.

Dobson noted that researcher George Barna has stated that people who have not committed to the Christian faith by age 18 have only a six percent chance of becoming Christians.

"The family is the greatest vehicle ever devised for transmitting the value system to the next generation," Dobson said.

LONG DISTANCE — James Dobson, founder and president of Focus on the Family in Colorado Springs, Colo., addresses messengers to the 144th annual national meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention via satellite uplink. Dobson was scheduled to appear live but instead spoke via satellite when mechanical problems forced his plane to make an emergency landing back in Colorado Springs, Colo. (Photo by Gibbs Frazeur)

Arthur addresses wives

[illegible]

Looking back

10 years ago

James T. Draper, pastor of First Church, Euless, Texas, is nominated to become the eighth president of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. If elected, he will succeed Lloyd Elder, who has been president of the Southern Baptist publishing house since 1984.

20 years ago

For the fourth consecutive year, messengers to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention vote to reaffirm the convention's 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement that declares that the Bible is "truth without any mixture of error."

50 years ago

In his report on the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, Baptist Record editor A. L. Goodrich writes, "As usual too much time was wasted with addresses of welcome. The only time the auditorium [in San Francisco] was filled was when Billy Graham spoke."

Gulfshore swamped by tropical storm deluge

By Sheri Pape, intern
Gulfshore Assembly

In the early morning hours of June 11, Tropical Storm Allison crossed the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

was conducting the fourth of six summer youth camps at Gulfshore.

Five hundred guests were in attendance when the storm hit Pass Christian.

Around 3:30 a.m., the

Also, due to the loss of electrical power at the assembly, the pumps were not working during the worst of the storm. Power was not fully restored for approximately eight hours.

"It was great to see the way the staff, youth faculty, and church sponsors pulled together to save the cars from the rising water," said Wheat.

Wheat and Chrestman, along with Youth Week faculty, awakened owners of the vans and helped move the vehicles to higher ground.

While three personal vehicles were damaged, no damage was sustained to the Gulfshore facility and property.

In spite of the loss of electrical power, the kitchen staff was able to prepare a hot breakfast for all the attending guests.

Many church leaders commented about the effectiveness of the staff at Gulfshore, and their assistance in moving vehicles, preparing and serving breakfast, and cleaning up the grounds in order to maintain a normal schedule.

"Many of the summer staff responded to the call for assistance in the early morning hours and came in to serve as best as they could," said Gulfshore manager Frank Simmons.

The regular staff, who live off of assembly grounds, were delayed in arriving because of flooded roads.

Reid Vance, program director for the MBCB Youth Weeks at Gulfshore said, "We were worried about a panic setting in with the kids, but luckily that did not happen and things ran smoothly."

Aubrey Cook, a youth from Poplar Springs Church, Braxton, rode out the storm at Gulfshore. "During the storm I wasn't really worried because I had God in my heart," said Cook.

Ouida Kennedy, an adult sponsor from Athens Church, Mendenhall, commented, "Allison added a lot of character to our trip. It was an exciting and unique time for us."

The power-outage did postpone a few of the morning activities at the camp. Morning worship was canceled, and classrooms in Kelly Auditorium had to be relocated.

However, the regular camp schedule resumed by mid-afternoon.

When power was restored, the pumps began working and the floodwaters receded by early afternoon.

The sun came out for the first time in a week, and the remainder of June 11 ended up being a beautiful day.

Tropical Storm Allison was unable to hinder the youth camp — there were 59 decisions for Christ during the week.

God still moved in the midst of the storm.



SPLISH SPLASH — Tropical Storm Allison surprised staff and guests at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian on June 11, with 8.3 inches of rain and 30 miles per hour wind gusts. Water backed up to the the assembly's main building when pumps were overwhelmed by the deluge. (Photo by Sheri Pape)

Gulfshore Assembly, a retreat facility in Pass Christian owned and operated by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), experienced the remnants of the powerful storm with 8.3 inches of rain and wind gusts up to 30 miles per hour.

As messengers gathering for the 144th annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention just down the road in New Orleans weathered Allison's heavy rainfall and strong winds, the MBCB

Gulfshore security guard notified summer support staffers Kelly Wheat and Paul Chrestman of rising water on the south side of the property. The rate of rainfall was exceeding pump capacity, endangering a number of church vans.

Gulfshore is equipped with pumps to drain water from the property, which lies below sea level. Because so much rain fell in a short period of time, the pumps became overloaded.

NAMB commends heroes on 'rescue mission'

NEW ORLEANS (Editor's Network) — Anybody can be a hero — even Baptists, according to North American Mission Board (NAMB) President Robert Reccord.

During his report June 13 at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, Reccord challenged Baptists to abandon their fears and "rescue" the lost.

"You and I are called on a rescue mission," he said. "We must go though we may not return. Whatever it takes. North America is awash of people who are lost. Now they are going under."

The true heroes often are common people, Reccord said. One such, he explained, is Mission Service Corps volunteer Sue Low, an elderly woman who participates with prison ministries in Dallas. During her ministry, she has witnessed to hundreds of inmates.

In a testimony, Low said she never has felt nervous about going into prisons. "Why should I be (afraid) when I have such a great God?" she asked.

More Baptists should be like Low, Reccord said.

"If Sue can go into the jails, you can go into your communities," he urged. "We have to go now and win the lost. We need more heroes, more people with uncommon commitment."

Reccord gave illustrations of other work Baptists are doing through NAMB:

- Student ministries. Young people are not the problem, they are the solution, he said. "Thousands of col-

lege students are giving their lives to Christ each month. I'm not worried about our kids,

I'm more worried about their parents."

NAMB recently assisted 2,400 campuses across the country with starting FISH clubs, a strategy that helps students talk to friends about Christ.

Additionally, "we've got so many college students saying 'I want to go' that we don't have the funds to send them," Reccord said.

- Strategic Focus Cities. Reccord said work in NAMB's Strategic Focus Cities — Phoenix and Chicago — continues to prosper.

Attendance numbers by participating churches in Phoenix are up by 21%. Baptisms also are up there by 47%, he said.

In Chicago, about 100 new churches are being started. During the past two years, baptisms increased 114%, and Sunday School attendance rose 87% among participating churches, he said.

- New church development. NAMB worked with churches and associations to help start 1,658 churches in 2000 and 1,747 churches in 1999, he said. Of those, 55% were African-American or language churches.

- Mission funding. NAMB has 5,081 missionaries in the field, Reccord said. The number of missionaries that receive all their funding from the agency has risen by 43% since 1997, he added, and the number of students serving as semester missionaries is up 65%.

During the presentation, Reccord also unveiled two new television commercials produced by NAMB to be used by local churches.



REAL LIFE HERO — During a rescue-themed presentation, Robert E. Reccord (left) president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention, introduces Mission Service Corps volunteer Sue Low during the annual NAMB report to SBC messengers. Low serves in Dallas, where she leads Bible studies and shares Christ with men in correctional institutions. Throughout her ministry, she said during a live interview with Reccord, she has led more than 1,600 individuals to faith in Christ. (Photo by Kent Harville)

No BR issue on July 5

Due to postal regulations that limit The Baptist Record to 50 issues per year, the newspaper will not be published on July 5. The next issue will be dated July 12. News items to be published in the issue of July 12 must be received in the offices of the newspaper no later than the close of business on July 5, and advertising information must be received by June 28. The staff of The Baptist Record wishes for you and your family a happy celebration of our nation's birthday.

Dying missionary pleads for Baptists to 'go'

NEW ORLEANS (Editor's Network) — Dying of lung cancer, missionary Charles Beaty limped onto the stage of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) to urge Baptists to share the Gospel throughout the world.

His challenge climaxed the annual report of the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"It has to be us," said Beaty, who recently traveled with his wife, Christie, on a mission trip to North Africa after being diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. "If we don't go, whom will we send and who will go for us?"

Beaty was one of several IMB representatives who shared testimonies of lives being changed on the mission field. Baptists held hands and prayed for Beaty before he left the stage.

IMB President Jerry Rankin said more Baptists must follow Beaty's example. "What about you?" Rankin asked messengers. "The urgency of reaching a lost world has led many others to respond."

Last year, 879 new missionaries were sent out by the IMB, Rankin reported.



FINAL FAREWELL — Missionaries Charles Beaty (left) and his wife Christy (center) are introduced by Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) International Mission Board (IMB), during the annual IMB report to messengers attending the SBC in New Orleans. Charles Beaty has been diagnosed with adenocarcinoma of the lung and he could die this summer. His wife is expecting their fourth child, already named Abigail, in July. (Photo by Gibbs Frazier)

almost tripled to more than a thousand in just the last three years.

"Southern Baptists are not only going to places all across the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, they are going in record numbers."

In the last two years, the number of short-term volunteers has increased from 20,000 to more than 30,000, including more than 3,500 college students and almost 2,000 high school students, Rankin said.

"Record numbers of college graduates are giving two years to the Journeyman program, more and more Southern Baptists 50 years and older are offering themselves for service with the Masters program, and the number surrendering their lives for career appointment continue to grow," he said.

Missionaries also reported 451,000 overseas baptisms in 2000 — a 24% increase over the previous year, Rankin said. Church starting movements continue to rise as more than 38,000 additional mission congregations were reported, he added.

Baptists must continue to commit to the mission field, Rankin said.

"Many going to places we would have never imagined," he said. "The uttermost is being reached as the number of people groups and strategic population segments being impacted by your missionaries has

THE "GOT-TO" SYNDROME

Recently, I was visiting with Clark Hensley, the Lord's great servant who worked for Mississippi Baptists so many years and worked with all of us to enrich our lives.

He told me that he was only 14 months short of his 90th birthday. He still smiles and giggles like he is in his twenties! It seems to me that the spirit of a person wears down slower than the body does.

As we visited, Hensley said to me, "I enjoy reading your article each week." Somewhat surprised, I simply said, "Well, thank you!" and wondered what might be coming next.

I have known some 90-year-old people who had very little restraint about what they thought or said, but Hensley went on to say, "You write like



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

you have something to say instead of writing because you have to write."

I thanked him again and just sat there thinking about his words. It is true, I do not *have* to write, but rather I *get* to write.

It seems so easy to get the "Got-to" syndrome. I'm not sure what kind of disease this is, but I have seen it attack folks — sometimes, me!

Just my simple, non-professional evaluation of a syndrome is that it is what doctors

tag on something when they are unsure of the diagnosis and therefore unsure as to how to treat it — but yet need to do something.

In church life, I have observed that all of us are susceptible to the "Got-to" syndrome. It's hard to figure out how some of us catch it. Often we are infected by it, and even say that we are, but don't pay much attention to it.

Anybody can get it. I've heard deacons say they've *got* to go to a meeting, or *got* to take care of something in church life. The preacher says he has *got* to go to the hospital, or *got* to do a funeral or a wedding, or he has *got* to make a visit.

Singers catch it as they've *got* to get ready to sing. Sunday School teachers can even have a fever with it as they've *got* to get ready for Sunday morning.

I know that sometimes we are just saying that, and at other times we really have a serious case of this disease.

One of the problems with the "Got-to" syndrome is that it spreads to others and it can spread so quickly.

Someone who enjoys coming to church, singing in the choir, serving the Lord, going

to see the sick, and sharing with the lost, can get around someone with the "Got-to" syndrome and come down with the illness almost as quickly as the snap of a finger.

I'm telling you, it's incredible! For me, at least related to writing my article for Directions each week, I still see it as a wonderful "Get-to" experience rather than a "Got-to."

What a privilege of being able to go into the homes of Mississippi Baptists with a word of encouragement, a note of inspirational information, or a devotional thought.

I rarely lack for topics which I could write about — wonderful people, wonderful churches, and wonderful things that God is doing.

Besides that, there are so many of you who write, e-mail, call, or see me and say, "Why don't you write an article on..."

Sometimes I do just that, but it doesn't make it into The Baptist Record because there are too many other articles waiting to be used.

Sometimes I do not write an article on a topic requested because I cannot get it put together in a way that makes any sense to me or shares any light with anyone else.

I even work at it to the point that I am on the verge of the "Got-to" syndrome and then I back away.

With all the other things that may affect my good health and mental stability, I don't need to catch the "Got-to" syndrome.

Romania trip planned for July 12-24

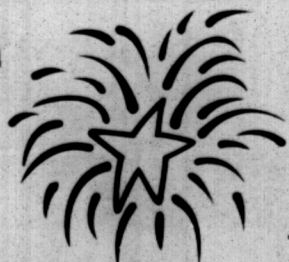
The 2001 edition of the annual Romanian-American Mission Trip, composed primarily of Mississippi Baptist volunteers, is scheduled for July 12-24. Jackson businessman Wayne Ball, a member of First Church, Brandon, said the mission team is in the process of gathering resources to continue the team's goal of building as many Southern Baptist churches as possible in the country. Four locations will be visited again this year with Vacation Bible School taught to approximately 200 children each day in each town, he said. For more information on the 2001 mission trip and the Romanian-American Mission program, contact Ball at (601) 825-3366 during the day or (601) 825-7011 in the evenings.

COUNTRY WOODS BAPTIST CHURCH

presents

Byram's 4th of July Celebration
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JUST FOR THE RECORD



Younger Mission Friends of First Church, Pascagoula



Older Mission Friends of First Church, Pascagoula



GAs of First Church, Pascagoula



RAs of First Church, Pascagoula

Mission group recognition service was recently held at First Church, Pascagoula. Groups recognized were (pictured) Younger Mission Friends (age 3); Older Mission Friends (age 4-kindergarten), dressed in Arab attire; GAs; and RAs.

Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, will feature The Crimson River Quartet on July 21 and Elite on Aug. 17. For additional information, call (662) 895-2661.

Youth building dedication service will be held at Wesson Church, Wesson, on July 1 at 10:45 a.m., followed by a potluck dinner in fellowship hall. The dedication service and open house for the parsonage will begin in the afternoon.

Summer Celebration - First Monday, will be held at Daniel Memorial Church, Jackson, July 2 at 7 p.m. The guest speaker is Hal Kitchings, pastor of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton. Worship leader is Richard Joiner of Mississippi College. Steve Potts is pastor.

Marvelous Mondays will be offered at First Church, Pearl, during the month of July, beginning at 7 p.m. The services will include a concert by the children's choirs, July 2;

family night, July 9; missions night, July 16; student night, July 23; and senior adult night, July 30. Tommy Mitchell is pastor. For additional information, call (601) 939-4476.

GAs of First Church, Grenada, held its recognition service on May 9. GAs pictured (from left, front row) are Morgan Amis, Stephanie Branson, Ashland King, Kristen Vance, Katie Lee Jones,

Lauralee Beardain; (second row) Raven Woods, Kayla Carson, Alex Armstrong, Kayla Williamson, Jo Anna Mims, Karah Holland, Holly Rawson; (back row) Mary Katherine Lott, Anna Carpenter, Jenna McMurphy, Valerye Windham, Courtney Granholm, Whitney Dedmon, and Katie Boyette. Brandy Artman, Cassie Cummings, Claire Hammond, and Taylor Holland, not pictured.



GAs of First Church, Grenada

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Charles Warren "Charlie" Horner, 89, of Alpharetta, Ga., formerly of Jackson, died at his home on June 3. He previously served as the state director of the Baptist Student Union of Mississippi and a professor of English and dean of men at Mississippi College (MC). Horner is survived by his wife of 55 years, the former Eva Lois Davis of Jackson; children, Janet Brown of Alpharetta, Ga., and Davis Warren Matheson Horner of Greenville, S. C.; and four grandchildren. Memorials may be made to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 250, Jackson, MS 39205; or to the Chester E. Swor Student Foundation Trust, Mississippi College, P.O. Box 4005, Clinton, MS 39058.

Stephen C. Reynolds, president and CEO of Baptist Memorial Health Care Corp., Memphis, Tenn., recently was elected to the board of directors of VHA Inc., a nationwide network of more than 2,100 leading community-owned health care organizations and their affili-

ed physicians. Reynolds also serves as chair for the National Committee for Quality Health Care, a membership and educational organization comprising senior leaders from all sects of the health care industry who share an interest in the promotion of quality health care and is a Fellow in the American College of Health Care Executives. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in science from Arkansas State University

and earned a master's degree in health administration from Washington State University of Medicine.

New Elbethel Church, Oxford, recently licensed Donald W. McKenzie to the ministry. McKenzie is available for pulpit supply, interim, revivals, and can be contacted at (662) 236-3821. James Burcham is pastor of New Elbethel Church.



Reynolds

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JUST FOR THE RECORD

kids and are proud to say that we now have 51 kids on the roll and also had 23 visitors," said Pam Runnels, youth director.

New Orleans Seminary recent graduates (pictured) in the music certificate program, Jackson Center, are (from left, back row) Jimmy McCaleb, teacher; Michael Bryant; Charles Richardson; David



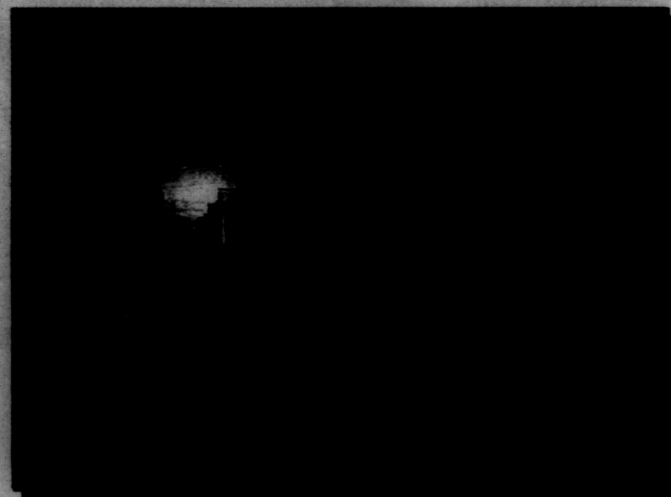
New Orleans Seminary music certificate program graduates

Weems; Jeff Sanders; (front row) Tony Massey; Travis Rushing; Mitzi Curry; Reggie Bridges; and Danny Harrison.

The Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) of Central Mississippi will be conducting a mentor training workshop August 3-4 at Calvary Church, Jackson. CWJC of Central Mississippi seeks to provide a Christian context in which women in need are equipped

for life and employment, as well as a missions context in which women help women. This is accomplished by seeking to minister to the total woman — spiritually, physically, emotionally, and educationally — enabling the women in need to gain skills for employment and life. CWJC mentorships, which are for a period of one year, help women discover ways to meet their own needs while providing a Christian

witness for them. Christian women interested in serving as mentors and attending the workshop should contact Donna Foster at (601) 924-4323, or Charlotta McGee at (601) 352-0184.



RAs of Damascus Church, Flora

Revival dates

Concord, Pelahatchie: July 8-11; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:45 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jimmy Porter, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, evangelist; James Stansburg, music; Billy McKay, pastor.

Hebron, Smithdale: July 8-13; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, Lake, evangelist; Clay Campbell, Smithdale, music; Rob Westbrook, pastor.

South 28th Avenue, Hattiesburg: Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Luther Price, North Carolina, evangelist; David Carney, South 28th Church, music; Leonard Walters, pastor.

VBS info

Big Level, Wiggins: July 9-13; 8:30 a.m.-noon; children age four through sixth grade.

Highland Church, Natchez, had an average of 120 children in attendance each day in addition to the average of 20 to 25 workers and teachers at Vacation Bible School, June 11-17. Stephanie McCall was director. David McGuffee is pastor.

Damascus Church, Flora, recently held its second annual awards banquet honoring all youth mission classes for their hard work throughout the year in missions and outreach projects both within the community and abroad. "We are so excited about our youth missions program. We started it 2 years ago with approximately 30



Older GAs of Damascus Church, Flora

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Junior Acteens of Damascus Church, Flora

Senior Acteens of Damascus Church, Flora



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

REACHING WYOMING

Editor:

I have pastored United Church of Riverton, Wyo., for five years. During this time it has been my privilege to work with several churches, associations, and individuals who have felt led to serve God through short-term missions in Wyoming.

United Church has several needs you may be able to help with. If you would like to know more about mission opportunities in Riverton, please contact me. We are always interested in having new partners in ministry. Prayerfully consider what your role in God's work in Wyoming may be, then call me at (307) 856-4410 or email me at dwbascue@hotmail.com. Together we can work to reach the people in Wyoming for Christ. Thank you.

Dale Bascue, pastor
United Baptist Church
Riverton, WY

NOT QUALIFIED?

Editor:

It really didn't sink in until I returned from the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). I realize now the significance of the criteria for selecting persons to serve in the SBC by the Committee on Committees. In addition to participation in the Cooperative Program (CP) one must now endorse the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message (BFM) to be considered.

It is possible to affirm the inerrancy of Scripture and not want to endorse the BFM. Unfortunately, you will not be qualified to serve in our denominational network. Your CP monies will be accepted but you will be excluded from service on the very committees, boards, and agencies that utilize those funds. Thanks to our new BFM, we now have an "instrument of doctrinal accountability." That means it's now possible to fail the test for being Baptist.

I hope I heard incorrectly at the SBC, but I don't think so. I'm reminded of the colonists

who cried "taxation without representation." We know what they did about it. I guess I'm just struggling about the SBC's willingness to accept my money but not my voice.

Some may say I've been influenced by the "dangerous individualism" that's sweeping our denomination or been "duped" by neo-orthodox thinking. I call it being a Baptist.

Danny Chisholm, pastor
Central Church, Meridian

THANKS, MISS. BAPTISTS

Editor:

I want to personally thank everyone who has lifted me to our Lord in their prayers over the past three months. On April 4, I entered Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson in order to have my left ankle fused. Complications developed and over the following weeks, I re-entered on two other occasions. I also developed a staph infection that nearly took my life. I know that without the prayers of so many faithful Christians, I would not

have made it through that experience. I want to thank Wallace Weatherly and Bill Causey, the two physicians who worked so tirelessly to bring me through this ordeal. I also want to thank the kind nursing staff on both the third and fifth floors of Baptist who were so wonderful in trying to help me through this difficult time.

I continue to wear a cast on my left foot, but hopefully, that will come off in the next two weeks. I just want to rejoice in knowing that so many personal friends and even strangers lifted me to the Lord in their daily prayers. Surely, God does heed the prayers of the righteous and my recovery is evidence of that. God bless each of you!

Ronny Robinson, exec. dir.
The Baptist Children's Village

PRAISE FOR PARTNERS

Editor:

As a Southern Baptist missionary serving in North Africa and the Middle East, we are writing once again to thank

Mississippians for their continued support of our ministry. Several Mississippi churches have stepped forth to become full partners in bringing the Gospel to our people group. We praise our Father for partners like you.

We would like to say thank you to the Mississippi Macedonian Call Foundation, who have been partners in providing transportation to Mississippi missionaries who are home on stateside assignment. This organization acts as a bridge between Mississippi Baptists who have donated used cars to missions, and the missionaries who sometimes must find reliable and economical transportation during their short times at home.

We would ask that you keep this organization before your readers as they continue to seek different ways of support for their missionaries.

Again, to each and every one of you, thank you so much for joining us. We love all of you.

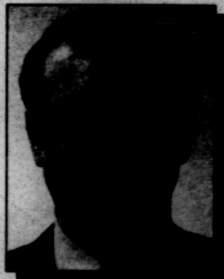
Your co-laborers in Christ.

Bob and Bev (last name withheld for security reasons)

STAFF CHANGES

Pelahatchie Church, Rankin Association, has called **Steve Mayes** as pastor effective May 20. He has served as pastor in Union and Jacksonville, Ala. Mayes is a graduate of William Carey College and the Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala.

Calvary Church, Petal, has called **Terrell Stringer** as pastor effective May 27. A native of Bassfield, Stringer received his education at Mississippi College and Mid-America Seminary. He has served churches in Mississippi for 30 years and spent the last 13 years as pastor of Murphy Creek Church, Louisville.



Stringer

Temple Church, Big Point, has called **Warren Langworthy** as interim pastor effective May 20. He is a native of St. Louis.

Trinity Church, Fulton, has called **Peter T. Fairley** as minister of music and youth, effective June 3. Fairley received his education at William Carey College and Southern Seminary. His previous place of service was Kilmichael Church. David Aultman is pastor of Trinity Church.

Cowart Church, Charleston, has called **Larry W. Yarber** as

pastor effective June 10. A native of Wayne County, Yarber received his education at William Carey College. His previous place of service was Antioch Church, Covington-Jefferson Davis Association.

Temple Church, Big Point, has called **David Addy** as minister of youth effective April 8. A native of Union, Addy received his education at Mississippi State University and plans to attend New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Harmony Church, Louisville.

Homecoming

Cedar View, Cedar Rapids, IA
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PART-TIME PIANIST NEEDED & part-time youth/children's minister needed. Please send resume to Hurley Baptist Church, P.O. Box 395, Hurley, MS 39555.

CHILDHOOD MINISTRIES DIRECTOR needed. Please send resume to Morrison Heights Baptist Church, 201 Morrison Drive, Clinton, MS 39056 or fax to (601) 924-5622, ATTN: Jennifer.

PART-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR for Deerfield Church, P.O. Box 973, Madison, MS 39130; (601) 856-5959 or fax: (601) 898-1874.

PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC, Panola County. Send resume to: Search

Committee, First Baptist Church, 108 West Lee Street, Sardis, MS 38666.

PART-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR for Salem Baptist Church (ten miles north of Tylertown). Send resume to: Eldredge Boyd, 124 Pittman Road, Kokomo, MS 39643.

MOUNT MORIAH BAPTIST CHURCH, Bogue Chitto, is seeking a part-time youth minister. Send resume to Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, ATTN: Susan Davis or Danny Moss, 814 Marwood Loop S.E., Bogue Chitto, MS 39629. Call Susan Davis at (601) 734-3915 or Danny Moss at (601) 833-8858.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, FULTON is seeking a director of day care/children's minister. Seminary degree with Early Childhood Education specialty preferred; salary and compensation commensurate with experience. Send resume to FBC Wee Care, P.O. Box 400, Fulton, MS 38843. Call (662) 862-3207 or fax (662) 862-5793.

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

When commitment crumbles

John 13: 37-38

By Kathy Mord Alford

It happens every day. Someone challenges your motives, your principles, your identity.

It happened to me.

I thought I was ready for it. I thought I knew myself. For over three years, Jesus had groomed twelve of us to build his church. Quite a promotion for a common fisherman.

Yet following Jesus wasn't effortless. Not because of him, but because none of my knowledge equipped me for the journey, and quite honestly, what Jesus taught didn't come naturally.

Jesus prompted us to love more and without restraint, to forgive freely, and to trust him.

The trusting part became

easy. When you see a man who has been dead for four days step out of his grave, it's not hard to trust the one who told him to walk. When you walk on water without getting wet, it's easy to trust the one holding your hand. Trusting makes sense when you're with Jesus.

Of course, when Jesus told us he was leaving, I expected him to let James, John, and me go with him. I couldn't imagine life without Jesus. Willing to follow this man who personified life itself, I even said I would lay down my life for him.

Jesus' voice reflected anguish when he repeated, "Lay down your life?" As if I didn't comprehend reality, he predicted that I would disown

him three times before the next sunrise.

See here, I'm no wimp. I've stared death in the face and won. The sea where I fished never bested me and Roman soldiers swerve when they eyeball my breadth.

I've taken care of myself since I was a tadpole — and, look at me now. I'm a whale! How could my wise teacher think me afraid of anything?

Hindsight has revealed that Jesus was teaching again. He would go ahead and prepare us a place. While we were waiting for him to take us there, we would not be idle. We would learn to live and love as he would — with the Helper he sent us.

As always, Jesus rebuked me in love and, though I am a sensitive fellow, I didn't fret. I would simply have to prove how devoted I was.

As we went to Gethsemane that fateful night, Jesus asked us to watch and pray with him.



Alford

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Final real security

Amos 6:1-7, 12-14

By Harold Simmons

The attack by Japan on Pearl Harbor had a devastating effect on the ability of America to make war. Much of our military equipment had been destroyed and it would take months and years to rebuild, refurbish, and resupply the loss. Also the loss of trained military men and women would require months to bring back our fighting ability.

America was demoralized and stunned because of this attack and its resulting devastation. We were relying on our military ability to protect ourselves. Amos was trying to warn Judah and Israel that they must rely on a right relationship with God for real security.

Faulty thinking (vv. 1-7).

Amos drew attention to the faulty thinking of the two kingdoms by exposing their evil lifestyles. The people of Israel and Judah had shut their eyes to their faults but God refused to cooperate.

God, through Amos, brought into the daylight how insecure they were. God pointed to three city-states (Calneh, Hamath, and Gath) that were as prosperous and as large as Israel. All three had fallen to Israel. Their own recent history proved the point that material greatness does not spell security.

Prosperity and wealth in and of themselves are not evil. Material things are amoral. That is, they are neither good nor bad.

The problems of Israel were that they had gotten their wealth by immoral and unethical practices and that they were relying on their wealth and material things rather than on God. This is faulty thinking in any age.

God's evaluation (vv. 8-11). In a chapel at Knott's Berry Farm in California there is a painting of Christ. The unusual thing about this painting is that no matter where you are in the chapel, it seems that the eyes of Christ are directly on you.

The picture represents a Biblical truth. God can see us from all angles and his evaluation is always correct. He sees with the eyes of righteousness; whereas, our sight is distorted by our own pride and misconceptions about ourselves.

Amos declares that the "Lord God Almighty" has made this evaluation or judgment. In American court life,

appeals can be made to higher courts of lower court rulings. We can appeal "all the way up to the Supreme Court" and they have the last word on any ruling.

Amos avows that what he is stating is from the Supreme Supreme Court. There are no appeals from what God declares. When God says, "for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," there is no appeal because it comes from the supreme judge. His evaluations are right and he has the power to carry out the sentence he will make.

The guilty will be punished (vv. 12-14). The punishment that God will bring will be complete and all inclusive. Amos reiterates the reasons God's judgement will come. They have reversed justice into poison and righteousness into bitterness.

These are the opposites of what God intended. "By our own strength" is a display of their assumption that they have

I abandoned my identity in Jesus that treacherous night to be safe, causing me to be unfaithful to the hours-old covenant I had made with my Lord. Yet he remained faithful to me, overcoming the next day's unimaginable death to restore me to a glorious fellowship with him.

I was never myself after that — didn't want to be. That's the powerful way he works: when you belong to him, he won't let you go. If you fail, he craves to return you to his loving fellowship where he'll protect and perfect your true identity.

Remember the old Peter? Hypocritical, self-reliant, and, though safe in anonymity, helpless to save Jesus from the cross. Instead, Jesus' unconquerable love and mercy transformed me from self-defeating to self-denying to make me satisfied and complete in him.

I can't wait to see him fulfill the same mighty work in you.

Alford is a member of First Church, McComb.



Simmons

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the editor, and must be contained in the message portion of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise, stating the who, what, when, where, and why of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be submitted as a JPEG file via e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not dated will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photos must be accompanied by a return address and stamped envelope.

Submit articles and photos to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 100, Memphis, TN 38101. E-mail: baprec@comcast.net

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

It is finished!

John 19:1-42

By Kathy Mord Alford

Why did Jesus have to die? Couldn't God have just forgiven us for our sins? After all, he is God and God can do anything he wants.

To answer these questions, we must first understand two basic concepts: who God is and who we are, compared to him.

Building a relationship with God is the only way to discover who he is. The better we know him, the more we will trust him. He reveals certain attributes to us to allow us to know him intimately, but unless we have confidence in these attributes, we cannot believe that he is our Lord.

First and foremost, we must believe that God is good and that his intentions toward us, born of love, are good. How else

can we trust him and his plans for us?

Two other attributes, his justice and mercy, characteristics which seem to contradict each other, explain why Jesus' death was necessary for our salvation.

God's glory, his very essence, expresses the perfect standard by which we, his creation, are measured. Good, kind, generous works boost our stature, but they can't equate us with God's perfection.

How many good deeds qualify us to be good enough? Comparing ourselves to God will always result in our falling short of his mark. The shortfall is called our sin nature and it separates us from perfect God.

We sin in three general ways: not measuring up to God's stan-

dard of perfection (missing the mark), rebelling against God, or deviating from his standard.

When Adam rebelled against God, sin became part of our human inheritance and enslaved us to Satan whose power feeds on our wrongdoing and sentences us to death.

God's mercy pleaded forgiveness, while his justice demanded retribution. The apparent dilemma prevented God from favoring one attribute over another, for God cannot be false to his own nature; otherwise, he would contradict his attributes of truth and immutability.

Therefore, to satisfy both his justice and mercy, God set in motion a plan whereby he could buy us back or redeem us from Satan and restore us to a right relationship with him.

God invited his people to cut a blood covenant with him, each pledging to spill his own blood if the covenant was broken. Only by faith and obedience

could his people keep the covenant, and the sin that so easily entangled them took them captive time and time again.

Throughout the Old Testament, God painted a picture of redemption with his law, allowing the blood of substitutionary animal sacrifices to grant temporary forgiveness. The sacrifices under the old system were repeated again and again, year after year, but even so, they could never save those who lived under the Law. If they could have, one offering would have been enough (Hebrews 10:1b-2a).

Recognizing that mankind would never be able to offer enough sacrifices to cover their sin forever, God colored the picture with his promise of Messiah, who would come to save his people.

Those who heard the promises with limited vision and earthly motives expected a savior to rescue them from physical and political oppression. After a thousand years of repetitious animal sacrifices and unfaithful hearts, God told his prophets, "Stop bringing meaningless

offerings. Stop doing wrong and learn to do right."

Yet true to his own covenant faithfulness, God revealed that he would make a new covenant with Israel, and that he would put his law within them, and they would know him, and he would forgive their sin (Jer. 31:33, 34b).

So when God's right time came, he sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem us from our sins once and for all (Gal. 4:4). Jesus, fully God, yet fully man, cut a new covenant with his followers and offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to buy us back forever from sin's death-grip.

The picture God painted in the Old Testament was only a copy of what was completed in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus.

Because he alone can raise us to God's perfect standard, Jesus' death on the cross bridges the chasm separating sinners from a holy God. Jesus is our standard as long as he is our Lord.

Alford is a member of First Church, McComb.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Be loyal to God

Amos 7:10-17; 9:13-15

By Harold Simmons

The motto of the United States Marine Corps is *Semper Fidelis* — always faithful. That means one can count on a fellow Marine in every circumstance.

Amos, by his example, was trying to get the people of Israel to understand that God wanted them to return to him and be always faithful.

Opposition to faithfulness to God (7:10-13). In every group, there are people who are for everything and those who are "born againsters" — who are against everything.

Amaziah, the high priest of Israel, was against the preaching of Amos. He was so fiercely against the message that he misquoted Amos to the king in order to silence Amos. He took Amos' words and twisted them to make it appear as though Amos was threatening the king right in his own sanctuary.

The message of Amos to Israel was a direct threat to Amaziah and his elevated position. If the people returned to the Lord, they would offer sacrifices only at the temple in Jerusalem. Amaziah would lose his position and influence because he was not of Levitical lineage.

Is it any wonder that Amaziah reacted by lashing out at Amos? He tried to discredit Amos because Amos testified in a manner that was convincing: "thus said the Lord."

Amaziah intimated that Amos was a "for-hire prophet" by calling him a "seer" (*haza*) not a prophet (*nabi*). Every person that is faithful to the Lord can expect the same type of reaction from others.

Opposition brings boldness (7:14-17).

Amaziah had leveled a personal attack on Amos, but Amos moved to answer the attack with bold words that could not be misunderstood nor disputed.

Amos gave his personal testimony. He stated that he did not

consider himself a professional prophet nor was he the son of a prophet. He was just an ordinary man whom God had called.

In fact, Amos said that God "took" him from his regular business. This statement has the idea that Amos felt compelled to follow God's leading. It is hard to argue with a person's personal relationship and walk with God.

The most effective method of witnessing is telling another person what God has done for you.



Simmons



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

How can a person call himself a Christian and not speak to his own mother, as my friend does?

If I could answer the "why" questions all the time, I would be a very wealthy man! Fortunately we don't always have to have answers, because the God of the universe understands and sees to the depth of a person. My guess is that your friend is hurting and is taking it out on his mother.

Why mother? Well, why not? She is as good as anyone else, when a person has to have someone to blame for the hurt in one's life.

Just because one calls himself a Christian does not erase him from being a sinner. Your friend is focusing on the hurt in his life rather than the Creator of life.

Parents are by no means perfect. Mothers are the first to admit that they make mistakes. However, even your friend's mother may not be the easiest person to love because of hurts in her life.

We need to get to the point where we have eyes like the Lord, to look beyond the actions of a person and see their need. With so few details, it is difficult to determine who has the bigger problem — the

one not speaking to his mother or the mother. You may not know the entire story. You really do not need to know.

You can encourage your friend by mentioning, "I notice that you do not speak to your mother. Can you tell me what is going on? How can I pray for you in this matter? There must really be something between you and your mother for you not to want to talk to her." You do not have to fix the problem. Just listen and let the person share with you what is going on.

What do you think of a 13-year-old girl dating a 17-year-old high school senior?

"No way!" is what I think of this situation. A 13-year-old dating a 17-year-old is not a good situation for either person.

The 13-year-old is too young for a 17-year-old's world, but our society is pushing children to grow up too quickly.

Thirteen-year-olds need to be with people their own age who are not pairing off. Thirteen-year-olds need lightness and ease in learning about relationships. So do 17-year-olds, for that matter.

If she continues this relationship, she will be isolated from her own peer group as they are not driving or having the freedoms a 17-year-old has. This mature world feels good and she may even look like a 17-year-old, but emotionally she is not ready.

The 17-year-old is in a dangerous situation also, because he does not need the burden of taking care of a younger child. He needs an companion more equal to his maturity level.

His world is preparing for college, work, and moving into adulthood. Being with a younger child keeps him from growing up. This type of relationship does not allow him the ability to be challenged by a person who can match his intellect and physical stature.

I know there are a lot of marriages out there that have wide age discrepancies, but these usually come about after high school — not in it.

Relationships like this do not work and often times cause much more hurt than success. Parents should keep a close watch on emerging adolescents and their friends.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. In central Mississippi, Ron Mumbower can be heard from 9-10 a.m. each Wednesday on WHJT-FM 93.5. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Marketing to minors

Underage consumers targeted by alcohol advertising

Teenagers with parents who enforce curfews and monitor their children's TV and music habits are less likely to use drugs, says a report released on February 21 by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse.

Teens with parents who are "hands off" and impose no restrictions on them are at four times the risk to smoke, drink, or use drugs than teens living in a house with rules.

Source: Holtman, Regina and Cheryl Wetzstein, "Parental control said to curb teen drinking, drug use." The Washington Times, National Weekly Edition, February 26; March 4, 2001, page 1.

Nationally, one in five traffic deaths of drivers younger than 21 involves alcohol, a number that has slightly increased from 1995-1997, according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration. In 1998, 42 percent of 12th graders reported riding with a driver who had been drinking alcohol, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"People have to understand that alcohol is the number-one choice of drugs in this country, and it's readily available," said Frank Winters, a member of the board of national directors of MADD and police chief in Clayton, Gloucester County, New Jersey.

Source: January, Brendan, "Kids suspected of boozing a swab away from detection." The Clarion Ledger, January 25, 2001, p. 3E.

Peer pressure appears to have more influence on teen girls than boys as they wrestle with the decision of whether to drink, a federal study found. Confidential surveys were given to 4,200 teens in Maryland's junior high schools.

"I'm not surprised at all. Girls go through this tremendous emotional and hormonal change as they enter the seventh grade," said Shannon McLinden, an author on the subject and a speaker on teen-age confidence.

"The change comes at a time when being your own person and trying to stand on your feet is really important."

The new study also showed that for boys and girls, the top indicator of whether youngsters begin drinking or smoking is whether they have friends who do. The single most important factor in teens smoking or drinking is the behavior of their five closest friends.

Source: Associated Press, "Girls more swayed by peer pressure to drink, survey finds." MSNBC.com, January 23, 2001.

Alcohol-glamorizing TV shows and commercials promote teen drinking mostly among kids who buy the idea that beer is a ticket to happiness and that TV scenarios are realistic, suggests a study out this week.

The good news for parents: They can influence adolescent attitudes about alcohol by expressing their opinions on television fare. Youngsters who said their parents often criticize TV programming saw less benefit in alcohol and were less likely to drink; those who said their parents praised shows, characters or commercials tended to think alcohol was cool, and they drank it.

Source: Elias, Marilyn, "Does alcohol-glamorizing TV shows cause teens to drink?" The Clarion Ledger, February 10, 2000, p. 6E.

Armed with new polling data suggesting that teens are more likely than adults to drink sweet fruit-flavored alcoholic beverages, a consumers group today urged the government to investigate the marketing of the popular products.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) calls the beverages "starter-suds" and says their bright, hip packaging intentionally resembles that of non-alcoholic lemonades, fruit punches, and soft drinks popular with teens.

The labels on products like Mike's Hard Lemonade, Doc Otis' Hard Lemonade, Sublime, Tequila, and Hooper's Hooch disclose alcoholic content. But the beverages disguise the

Alcoholism is a disease that can start with the first drink. Research has shown that one million eighth graders admit getting drunk and that one in nine people who drink continue on the path to alcoholism. Therefore, of the one million eighth graders who admit to drinking, 111,000 of them have a good chance of becoming an alcoholic.

What is disturbing to me is how many people help them along the way. Many teens have parents who throw drinking parties in their homes. These parents think they are safeguarding their teens from harm by keeping them from drinking and driving but they are playing Russian roulette with their children's lives.

Then you have the friendly neighborhood convenience store owner who sells to underage customers, or the older brother, or older friend who doesn't mind contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Advertising campaigns like "Friends don't let friends drive drunk" help save lives but a better campaign would be "Friends don't let friends waste their lives by using alcohol."

Despite the evidence, the big alcohol manufacturers continue to market their product to consumers under the age of 21, placing more value on profit than on the lives of children.

Television and the movies spread the message that drinking alcohol is cool, ignoring the fact that over 14 million people in the United States are alcoholics or abuse alcohol.

A federal government report estimated that alcohol-related illness or injury takes a personal, social, and economic toll on the American people — an estimated 100,000 lives and \$184.6 billion dollars annually. The 492-page report highlights research findings on alcohol use and abuse.

"Domestic violence, child abuse, fires and other accidents, falls, rape and other crimes against individuals such as robbery or assault — are all linked to alcohol misuse," stated Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala in her forward to the report. "Alcohol misuse is also implicated in diseases such as cancer, liver disease, and heart disease."

The good news is that efforts to keep young people from starting to drink, as well as programs to limit the availability of alcohol to underage drinkers are proving successful but there is still a long way to go.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer once said, "Work is commercially our greatest wastrel, socially it is our greatest criminal; morally and religiously it is our greatest enemy."

Help the younger generation to be as productive as they can be by encouraging them not to use alcohol. Set the example as a Christian and do not cause your brother to stumble.



Yancey

taste of alcohol to make them easier to drink, said George Hacker, the CSPI's director for alcohol policies, who asserts that they are intended as bridges to other forms of alcohol.

"Companies that market 'starter brews' and 'alcopops' aren't peddling adult drinks," Hacker said.

A CSPI poll, conducted in March by Penn, Schoen, & Berland Associates, involved telephone interviews with 600 teens aged 14 to 18 and 500 adults. Among the findings:

By a three to one margin, teens report more familiarity than adults with "alcopops" and 17- and 18-year-olds are more than twice as likely as adults to have tried them.

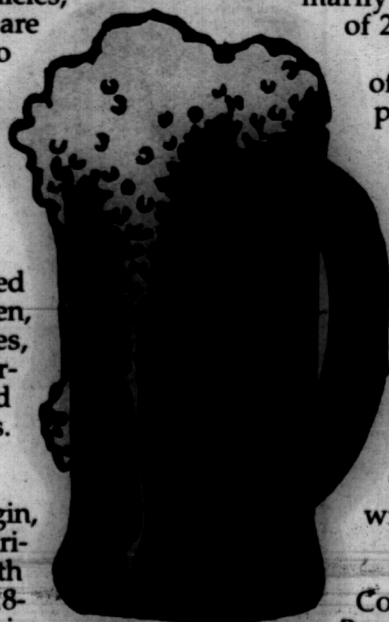
Most teenagers and adults believe that the new drinks are marketed primarily to people under the age of 21.

Nine in 10 teens and 67% of adults think that the companies make "alcopops" taste like lemonade to lure young people into trying them.

Forty-one percent of teens age 14 to 18 have tried an "alcopop" beverage.

More than half of all teens said the sweetness that disguised the taste of alcohol is a major reason teenagers chose "alcopops" over beer, wine, or cocktails.

Source: "Starter Drinks Consumer Group: Sweet Booze Attracts Teens." Abcnews.com, May 9, 2001.



If you are interested in receiving Christian Action updates via the internet and will share this information with friends and family, please e-mail me at [email address]. Include your name, address, phone number, and church name.

SBC Council on Family Life sounds alarm

NEW ORLEANS (Editor's Network) — Southern Baptists must rescue the American family from the precipice of peril, according to the first report from a task force created to do just that.

The Southern Baptist Council on Family Life presented guidelines for developing a family-saving strategy and creating "Great Commission Families" during its report to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) June 12.

The next day, the convention approved a resolution calling for "covenant marriages," a step also designed to strengthen the family.

Peril facing the family punctuated several presentations during the SBC meeting in New Orleans.

"We believe it is time for us to decide as a convention that we're going to stand for the families in America," stressed Tom Elliff, a former SBC president, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla., and chairman of the family council.

The council cited a litany of American family woes:

- One million children a year see their parents divorce.

- Thirty-five percent of our nation's children live apart from their biological fathers.

- In the last 40 years, pregnancies out of wedlock have increased 600%.

- In less than 40 years, cohabitation by unmarried couples has increased almost 1,000%.

- Fifty percent of children who do not live with their fathers have... never stepped foot in their father's home.

In his SBC president's address, James Merritt also emphasized the decline of families.

"There is an assault on the family today that is unparalleled in the history of the human race, and much of the damage is

self-inflicted," said Merritt, pastor of First Church in Snellville, Ga., and former pastor of Highland Church, Laurel.

"Increasingly, we are seeing fathers abdicate the throne of authority by allowing children

to execute a bloodless coup of the home," he claimed. "Go to any mall in America, and you will see kids wandering aimlessly like rudderless ships with colored hair; Mohawk haircuts; rings coming out of noses, lips, eyelids, and belly buttons, and you wonder, 'Where is Dad?'"

"No wonder the inmates are running the asylum and the monkeys are running the zoo."

SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman, who proposed the family emphasis a year ago, also decried the decline of the family.

"For the first time ever, married couples with children make up less than 25% of the America population," Chapman said, citing data from the 2000 U.S. Census. "It's our prayer and hope we'll be able to save the families of America."

The Census data Chapman referenced shows 23.5% of U.S. households are comprised of married couples with children in the home. That reflects a decline of about two percent in the decade of the 1990s. However, married couples

either with or without children in the home still constitute 52% of U.S. households.

Census data reveal the decline is due in part to Americans living longer, with more widows and widowers

• Enable pastors and church leaders to mutually identify and affirm key biblical principles for marriage and family.

In his president's address, Merritt insisted, "Our convention ought to be known as a



WILLIAM CAREY COLLEGE AT SBC — Gregory Champagne (left), pastor of First Church, Brooksville, Fla., chats with Michael Chute, chairman of the department of theater and communications at William Carey College in Hattiesburg, beside the school's exhibit at the 2001 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in New Orleans. Chute is the former editor of the Baptist Witness, the newsjournal of the Florida Baptist Convention. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

alive than ever before, as well as Americans as a whole waiting until later in life to get married and have children.

In taking on the task of saving America's families, the Council on Family Life will not reproduce work of SBC agencies, Chapman noted. The council "has been formed to sound the alarm that the traditional Judeo-Christian values of the family are under assault."

The council's interim report to the convention outlined five guidelines to structure its work as it develops long-term strategies.

The council noted a family-saving strategy must:

- Draw together both our resources and our people with the goal of elevating our families and the meaning of the word 'family' to God's standard as clearly stated in Scripture.

- Deal with both our internal practices and the external perception of our convention.

- Assist in the development of strong family mission...

family-friendly convention and as a convention that unapologetically stands for marriage between a man and a woman, period."

- Emphasize our desire to provide an authentic ministry to those whose lives and families have been fractured and ravaged by the adversary; seek to provide ... compassionate restoration and encouragement typified by our Savior, made possible by the grace of God and consistent with the clearly stated principles of the Scripture.

The status of marriage and related issues also was on the minds of messengers to the convention.

Six items presented as motions or resolutions from the floor addressed the growing acceptance of homosexuality in America, with one calling on President George W. Bush to declare June Heterosexual Family Pride Month.

The resolutions committee brought a statement on covenant marriage that passed without discussion or dissent.

The resolution encouraged Southern Baptists "to commit themselves to the biblical principles expressed by the covenant marriage movement."

The family council's task is large, Elliff acknowledged as he looked to its work over the coming year.

"Families are not going to be rescued simply because we hope so, simply because we think God owes us," he said, "but because we decide we're going to do something about it."



MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE AT SBC — Gary Richardson (left), pastor of North Oxford Church, Oxford, and former president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, visits the Mississippi College (MC) exhibit at the 2001 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in New Orleans. Staffing the exhibit were (from left after Richardson) Lance Clay, MC alumni director; Danny Rutland, MC vice-president for advancement; Bo Roberts, MC interim president; and Justin Jackson, MC admissions counselor. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death.
(I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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NDT VCLML LNST,
LWYCPWTZ ANHA HWM-
RACT YC; BWG S FCGRC-
SIC HANH ISGHMC SL
QWDC WMH WB YC.
EMUC CSQAH: BWGHZ-LSJ

Clue: B = F

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Seven: Seven.